has been a sharp rise in the import of machine tools;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the import increased at double the rate of increase in indigenous production;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(d) what is the annual indigenous production and import during this decade;

(e) whether Government have any plan to boost up indigenous production and restrict import; and

(f) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a), (b) and (d) According to information available with the Government, the details of production and imports of machine tools during the year 1978, 1986 and 1987 are as under:—

| Year | Production (Rs. crores) | Imports |
|---|---|---|
| 1978 . . . | 121 | 40 |
| 1986 . . . | 325 | 250* |
| 1987 . . | 370* | 200* |

*(Estimated figures)

(c) The main reason for the larger import of machine tools in recent years has been the shifting pattern of demand from conventional machine tools to special purpose and CNC machine tools. The industry is in the process of adjusting to this shift in demand.

(e) and (f) Government have encouraged foreign collaborations for import of modern technology for the Machine Tool Sector to enable the indigenous manufacturers to upgrade their technological standards. Government have also introduced a Technology Upgradation Scheme in August, 1987 for selected capital goods industries including machine tools. In terms of this scheme, specified items of capital equipments required for the manufacture of machine tools have been allowed to be imported on a concessional rate of import duty of 35 per cent. In the budget of 1988-89, the excise duty in CNC systems has been reduced to 5 per cent *ad valorem*. The customs duty on the import of CNC systems and their parts has also been reduced from 80 per cent to 55 per cent *ad valorem*. These will help the machine tool industry to modernise and upgrade technology. As regards the restriction of imports of machine tools, the imports are allowed after taking into account the indigenous capability and in accordance with the imoprt policy in force.

**Rural Postal Network**

1895. SHRI SUBAS MOHANTY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of Plan funds spent on the rural postal services during 1985-86 and 1986-87 and the funds proposed to be spent during 1987-88, 1988-89 and 1989-90;

(b) the percentage of Plan funds spent in suburban and rural areas separately during the same period, year-wise and

(c) the figures regarding the total income from rural post offices and actual expenditure on rural postal network during 1985-86 and 1986-87?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) Information for the period 1985-86 to 1988-89 is furnished in the annexed statement. *See* below. The position in respect of 1989-90 can be indicated only when the Annual Plan for that year is finalised towards the end of 1988-89.

(b) It is not feasibe to allocate Plan expenditure as between "Urban", "suburban" and "rural" because the budgetary heads which are prevalent at present do not provide for such a distinction except for the limited purpose of opening of new post offices covered in part (a) of the reply.

(c) It is not practicable to state the total income from rural post offices because assessment of income is carried out only in respect of extra-departmental offices and that also once in three years. Departmental post offices maintained on a permanent basis in rural areas are not subject to periodical assessment of income nor is it practicable to state with any degree of accuracy what the total expenditure on rural postal network is because apart from the pay and allowances paid to employees posted in rural areas and other direct expenses such as rents, there are supervisory overheads at various levels which cannot be conveniently apportioned as between 'Urban' and 'rural'.

**Statement**

1. Percentage of Plan funds spent on rural postal services ("Opening of new post offices in rural areas")

| | |
|---|---|
| 1985-86 | 0.05 |
| 1986-87 | 0.09 |

2. Percentage of estimated Plan expenditure on rural postal services ("Opening of new post offices in rural areas")

| | |
|---|---|
| 1987-88 | 1.43 |
| 1988-89 | 6.8 |

**Speedy Post Service to Bolpur Shantiniketan**

1896. SHRI NARAYAN KAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to connect Bolpur Shantiniketan with a speedy post service; and

(b) if so, by when and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply above. The Principal requirement for the introduction of this service is the availability of air service with suitable arrival/departure timings vis-a-vis despatch and receipt of mail. The proposed service from Bolpur, Shantiniketan does not fulfil this requirement.

**Prices of Vitamin A and Vitamin C**

1897. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to the answer to question 681 given in the [illegible] na on the 29th February, 1988 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the producers of Vitamin A and Vitamin C have increased their prices;

(b) if so, whether the producers have provided the break-up as required under DPCO, 1987 before increasing the prices; and

(c) if so, what are the names of the companies which submitted the break-up?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The names of the companies who submitted the break-up are:

1. Vitamin A

   M/s. Roche Products Ltd.

   M/s. Kerala State Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

2. Vitamin C

   M/s. Ambalal Sarabhai Enterprises.

**Push-button Telephones to MPs**

1898. SHRI SURAJ PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether push-button telephone instruments have been provided to the Members of Parliament and other VIPs;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether telephone instruments of ex-MPs in Delhi will also be replaced by push-button telephones; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) Yes, Sir.